

What is the “Joint Labor Management Wellness-Fitness Initiative”?

A Non-Punitive Program put forth by the IAFF and IAFC to improve the wellness of fire department uniformed personnel while following NFPA 1582. Wellness includes Medical Fitness; Physical Fitness; Emotional Fitness; and, Access to Rehabilitation. The program was put together for and intended to strengthen uniformed personnel so their mental, physical, and emotional capabilities are flexible enough to survive the stresses and strains of life and the workplace. Each year, death and injury surveys demonstrate that firefighters need high levels of fitness to perform safely in the fire service. “Long hours; shift work; sporadic high intensity work; strong emotional involvement; high levels of stress; long-term exposure to chemicals and infectious disease and exposure to human suffering places firefighting among the most stressful occupations in the world.” With that comes heart disease, lung disease and cancer – the three leading causes of firefighter death.

What are my benefits?

- ☺ Greater strength & stamina
- ☺ Weight reduction and/or control
- ☺ Lower cholesterol & blood levels
- ☺ Decreased risk of death/injury/disability
- ☺ Heightened job performance & enjoyment from work
- ☺ Improved performance in physical activities
- ☺ Better posture and joint functioning
- ☺ Reduction of anxiety, stress, tension and depression
- ☺ Increased energy, general vitality, and mental sharpness
- ☺ Enhanced self-esteem & self-image
- ☺ More restful & refreshing sleep
- ☺ Enhanced capacity to recover from strenuous and exhaustive work

- ☺ Increased tolerance for heat stress & more effective body cooling
- ☺ Improved mobility, balance & coordination

What is FROMS and how does it affect me?

FROMS houses the different components of the Wellness-Fitness Initiative: Medical, Fitness, Behavioral (CISM) and Rehabilitation. The medical exam is specific to the fire department’s uniformed personnel. The exam is mandatory and must be conducted every 12 months. The physical is “hands-on” and includes: vital signs; head; eyes, ears, nose & throat; neck; cardiovascular; pulmonary; gastrointestinal; genitourinary (testicular and hernia evaluations for men and annual pelvic exam for women); rectal; lymph nodes; neurological; musculoskeletal; and, body composition. Prior to your physical appointment you must have your blood drawn. With this, a blood analysis is conducted to check: White blood count; Red blood count; Platelet Count; Liver function test; Triglycerides; Glucose; Blood Urea; Nitrogen; Creatinine; Sodium; Potassium; Carbon Dioxide; Total Protein; Albumin; Calcium; and Cholesterol Tests (LDL or HDL). Which cholesterol is good for you? Remember H is for Happy...HDL is the good cholesterol. Also immunizations and infectious disease screening is conducted...remember to get your vaccinations. Results from testing will be measured against the individual’s previous examinations and assessments and not against any standard or norm. Medical practice standards may be used when results indicate that life saving intervention is required. All information is confidential and the HIPPA law is strictly enforced.

Tell me about the fitness component...

The Wellness-Fitness

Initiative has certain components that must be met. Medical clearance must be obtained by all personnel prior to any involvement in any exercise regimen. Each firefighter should have at least 60-90 minutes of exercise per shift (scheduling permitting). There should be adequate equipment that is maintained and safe facilities for a total and balanced exercise program. Peer Fitness Trainers (PFTs) have been enlisted to help educate and set up/design a program for you. To incorporate fitness throughout the **fire department, we have started training** officers in OCS class and Recruits during Recruit School to “spread the word” of fitness and hopefully get everyone involved. **When you come up for your physical you will stay and take a Fitness Evaluation that is MANDATORY, annual, non-punitive and confidential. With this evaluation you will receive feedback on your current level of fitness, level of improvement since your last assessment and a suggested exercise program. Some of the confidential data collected will be used in future fire service research. The evaluation will test Aerobic Capacity, Muscular Strength, Muscular Endurance, and flexibility. A basic screening will be taken to include: Fat percentage through skin folds, B/P, pulse, weight and height. Some of the tests conducted will measure leg power vs. leg strength; balance; hand and arm strength through an isometric contraction; and flexibility. There is NO PASS/FAIL – just a baseline for you to improve yourself.**

